



The Sarajevo Sentinel

A newsletter for the American citizens living, working, and visiting Bosnia and Herzegovina

Produced by the Consular Section of US Embassy Sarajevo

SPRING/SUMMER 2010

US Embassy Sarajevo

Alipašina 43

71000 Sarajevo

(387) 33 445 700

(387) 33 221 837 FAX

In case of after-hours emergency, please call the main Embassy line.

American Citizen Services

Walk-in Hours:

Monday to Friday: 2pm - 3:30pm

Friday: 8am - 10:30am

**We can provide better service if you make an appointment at*

<http://sarajevo.usembassy.gov/service.html>

ACS e-mail: rws@state.gov

Non-Immigrant Visa Hours:

By appointment only

Call Visa Information Service:

(387) 33 295 375

Immigrant Visa Hours:

By appointment only

(387) 33 445 700 x2453

IVConsularSarajevo@state.gov

Don't forget to register with the

Embassy! We frequently send out important information on country conditions and if you're not registered, you will not get our emails. You can register in person at the Embassy or online at: <http://www.travel.state.gov>

The Embassy will be closed:

July 5 – Independence Day



Introducing the New SMS Alert System

US Embassy Sarajevo has launched a new SMS Alert System so that you can receive important information about the security situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina on your cell phone. The SMS Alert System will not replace our current email system but will be a supplement for the times when you are unable to check your email. This new system will send a condensed version of U.S. Embassy Sarajevo warden messages directly to your mobile phone via SMS.

The SMS Alert System is free. In order to enroll, you must send us your BiH mobile phone number via email to rws@state.gov with the subject line "Add Me to SMS".

At any point, you can choose to leave the SMS Alert System. All you need to do is to send an email to rws@state.gov with the subject line "Remove Me from SMS".



10 Year Visas for Bosnian Citizens



On May 21, 2010, US Ambassador to BiH Charles English announced:

"Based on the US Embassy's recommendation, the United States Departments of State and Homeland Security have approved, effective Monday, May 24, extending the validity of tourism and business category visas for Bosnia and Herzegovina from the current one year period to ten years. This is the maximum allowable world-wide. Now, visitors for tourism and business need only come to the Embassy once every 10 years to renew their visas.

Increased travel of Americans and Bosnians to both of our countries will, we believe, bring our two countries even closer together. Every year, thousands of Bosnian citizens visit the United States for tourism, to conduct business, to study, and to visit family and friends. With these ten-year multiple-entry visas for tourists and business-people, I hope that more will be able to do so in the years to come. This visa validity extension will serve to reinforce our already robust friendship with the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina."



Upcoming presidential and parliamentary elections in BiH

On October 3, 2010, general elections will take place in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The citizens will be electing three members of the Presidency (one Bosniak, one Croat, one Serb), who are to serve a 4-year term. The chairmanship rotates every eight months among the three members.

In the House of Peoples (*Dom Naroda*) 15 members are elected by indirect vote to serve 4-year terms. In the National House of Representatives (*Predstavnicki Dom*) 42 members are elected by proportional representation to serve 4-year terms. Members of entity and cantonal parliaments will also be elected.

The pre-election period is likely to be characterized by increased tension resulting from the rhetoric of the campaigning politicians, continued economic stagnation, and possible protests regarding reforms of social benefit programs.

As always, we remind American citizens that even demonstrations intended to be peaceful can turn confrontational and possibly escalate into violence. American citizens are therefore urged to avoid such gatherings and to exercise caution if within the vicinity.

ASK THE CONSUL

Have a question about what we do? Please email us at rws@state.gov and you may see your question in the next issue of the Sarajevo Sentinel.



New Online Appointment System for Passports, Birth Registrations, and Notarials

The American Citizen Services Unit has introduced an online appointment system for all citizen services, including passports, birth registrations, notarial services, and general inquiries. Please make your appointment before you visit the Consular Section. Appointments may be made at any time via the Internet through the U.S. Embassy website:

<http://sarajevo.usembassy.gov/service.html>

For emergency appointments, please call: (387) 33 445 700 ext. 2210 or 2337

Police Certificates

A certificate of good conduct is proof that a person lacks a criminal record. While the U.S. Embassy cannot provide criminal records information, U.S. citizens seeking to obtain proof of their lack of criminal record can contact the local police department where they last resided in the United States or submit a written request for an FBI records check to the Criminal Justice Information Services Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (see www.fbi.gov). The FBI records check request must be accompanied by satisfactory proof of identity (including name, date and place of birth) and a set of roll-linked fingerprint impressions, along with a certified check or money order for the processing fee.



Military and Overseas Voters, Submit your Ballot Request for the June and July State Primaries

The following States will hold Primary Elections during July on the dates indicated.

July 20, 2010: Georgia

July 27, 2010: Oklahoma

Register and Request Your Ballot

All members of the U.S. Uniformed Services, their family members and citizens residing outside the U.S. who are residents from these States and have not yet submitted a registration and ballot request (FPCA) for the 2010 calendar year, should do so as soon as possible.

The FPCA ballot application and instructions for the above States are available at www.fvap.gov/FPCA. Click on your State on the map and follow the instructions to register and request an absentee ballot. Some States allow submitting the FPCA by fax or email in addition to regular mail.

MEET THE CONSUL

Are you a teacher or member of a civic group who would be interested in having a consular officer speak to your class or group? Please email us at rws@state.gov.

